(c) whether Pak representatives including the Pak President General Musharraf used the opportunity to raise bilateral issues between India and Pakistan on the occasion; and

(d) if so, the details of the issues and proposals raised thereat and Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) There was no resolution but a report of the meeting was adopted. The Ministers discussed the issue of free movement of media personnel within the region and in principle supported the idea as furthering these objectives of SAARC. They decided to present the matter to the SAARC Standing Committee for consideration.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Gen. Pervez Musharraf did raise bilateral matters particularly during a press meet. However, according to the SAARC Charter, bilateral and contentious issues are not to be raised during such meetings. This aspect was highlighted by our Minister for Information & Broadcasting who had attended the meeting.

Telephone Facility in Villages of Uttaranchal

*629. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no telephone facility in villages of Harara, Pinakot, Tolyon, Machhor, Bor and Bhonkhal villages of Patti Talla Salt in Almora district of Uttaranchal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor, and by when this facility is likely to be provided in these areas; and

(c) the steps proposed by Government for development of telephone network in all the villages in Talla Salt and laying of Optical Fibre Cable in Almora?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PROMAD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) Telephone facility is already available in Harara, Tolyon, Machhor and Bhonkhal villages of Uttaranchal state. The remaining two villages, Pinakot and Bor, could not be provided telecom facility as these two villages are located at a distance from the nearest telephone exchange at machhor and it is not possible to provide telephone on cable. However, Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) system has been planned at Machhor and most of the remaining villages around Machhor, within line of sight range of 25 km. including Pinakot and Bor, are likely to be covered with telecom facility by June, 2002. In Talla Salt area WLL system at Machhor is planned for providing Village Public Telephones and rural telephone connections. Faulty MARR based VPTs falling in the coverage area of WLL system are also planned to be replaced. There is a plan to lay 350 route km. optical fibre cable in Almora district.

Loss of Foodgrains due to Inadequate Storage

*630. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that considerable quantity of foodgrains is lost due to lack of proper storage facilities;

(b) whether Government have made any assessment of the losses of foodgrains in this manner;

(c) whether Government have undertaken any programe for construction of storage facilities for foodgrains in the country; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard and the number of storage facilities constructed during the last three years, year-wise, in each of the State/Union Territories and the cost involved in construction of each storage facility capacity-wise?